

AS AMENDED & ADOPTED BY COUNTY COUNCIL – MARCH 1998
COUNCIL AMENDMENTS ARE REFLECTED IN THIS TYPEFACE (ARIAL)

HISTORIC PRESERVATION POLICY GUIDELINES CHEVY CHASE VILLAGE

The following guidelines were drafted by the Chevy Chase Village Historic Preservation Committee and are adopted without changes [sic] in this amendment. The Committee was established by the Chevy Chase Village Board of Managers and represents a wide spectrum of views on the subject of historic designation. These guidelines have not been endorsed by the Chevy Chase Village Board of Managers.

The Master Plan Amendment anticipates that the Chevy Chase Village Board of Managers and the Chevy Chase Village Historic Preservation Committee will re-open drafting of the historic preservation policy guidelines to give residents further opportunity to participate in the process. Revised guidelines must be agreed upon by the Village Board of Managers and the Historic Preservation Commission. Once such joint agreement is reached, the Final Draft Amendment to the Approved and Adopted Master Plan for Historic Preservation: Chevy Chase Village – Expansion will be amended formally.

Because of the unusual size, complexity and character of the proposed Chevy Chase Village Historic District, any amendment to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation designating such a district should include historic preservation policy guidelines to assist in the implementation of the historic designation.

The purpose of including historic preservation policy guidelines in any such amendment would be to provide the Historic Preservation Commission ("HPC") and other applicable agencies with guidance regarding the intent of any historic designation. In addition, the purpose of these guidelines is to provide the HPC with general direction in reviewing applications for Historic Area Work Permits ("HAWP'S") and in administering the district, if designated. It is acknowledged that policy guidelines are intended to provide guidance, not rigid design strictures. Each HAWP application may present unique design issues and each will need to be reviewed individually.

The historic preservation policy guidelines which follow are intended to be broad and general in nature. They are not intended to be the final or ultimate design review manual for the proposed Chevy Chase Village Historic District. If the district is designated, it is strongly recommended that the HPC work closely with M-NCPPC staff, the Village Board of Managers, and Village residents to develop and adopt a specific set of design review guidelines, to be published and distributed throughout the Village, and to provide the HPC with specific direction in reviewing HAWP applications. The HPC, when reviewing a Historic Area Work Permit must give considerable weight to the recommendations of the Local Advisory Panel.

Alterations to Existing Structures

If the district is designated, the vast majority of Chevy Chase Village HAWP applications which will be reviewed by the HPC will involve exterior alterations, changes, and/or additions to existing structures.¹ In reviewing HAWP applications it is important for the HPC to recognize the "remarkably eclectic architectural fabric" of the proposed historic district. (See M-NCPCC Chevy Chase Village Historic District Study draft report at page 7.1.) Indeed, the architectural style most prominently identified with the proposed historic district is "Academic Eclecticism," accompanied by "many variants of the Classical, Medieval, Colonial Revival, Arts and Crafts, Mediterranean and Prairie styles." (See draft report at page 8.8.) In addition, most of the "pivotal" and "outstanding" buildings within the proposed district have themselves undergone major exterior alterations, changes and/or additions throughout the twentieth century. Nevertheless, a "shared self consciousness" has enabled the Village to maintain and enhance its "cohesive" architectural image. (See draft report at page 8.8.) Residents in the past have given careful attention to historic and cultural resources in Chevy Chase Village; an appreciation of these resources has resulted in an informed stewardship of the Village and perpetuated its cohesive identity. It is of paramount importance that the HPC recognize and foster the Village's shared commitment to evolving eclecticism, which necessitates substantial deference to the judgement, creativity and individuality of Village residents.

Another critical characteristic of the proposed historic district is its "naturalistic landscape," with numerous and "massive" mature trees, a "remarkable park-like setting," and "dramatic canopies for the roads and houses." (See draft report at page 7.1.) This aspect of the Village began with the original plan, has been fostered by the Village Board of Managers through the Village's Urban Forest Ordinance and the work of the Village arborist and Tree Committee, and is largely responsible for its continued existence as "one of the most intact and important examples of suburban planning and architectural expression built in the region before World War II." (See draft report at page 8.1.) Thus, it is also of paramount importance that the HPC recognize and foster the Village's open, park-like character, which necessitates respect for existing environmental settings, landscaping, and patterns of open space. For most Village residents, these landscape and scale issues far outweigh questions of architectural style. In addition, this critical characteristic of the proposed historic district requires careful attention by appropriate agencies to nearby developments which could adversely impact the Village's open, park-like character. Although the Historic Preservation Commission does not have the power to approve or disapprove subdivisions, the HPC should in general be lenient in reviewing and commenting on subdivisions for vacant lots to the Planning Board unless the subdivision will be extremely detrimental to the historicity of the district.

¹ Interior alterations, changes, etc. are not subject to review under the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Exterior paint color is also not subject to review.

Additional basic policies that should be adhered to are:

1. Preserving the integrity of the proposed Chevy Chase Village Historic District. Any alterations should, at a minimum, perpetuate the ability to perceive the sense of time and place portrayed by the district.²
2. Preserving the integrity of contributing structures in the district. Alterations to contributing structures should be designed in such a way that the altered structure still contributes to the district.³
3. Maintaining the variety of architectural styles and the tradition of architectural excellence.⁴
4. Design review emphasis should be restricted to changes that will be visible from the front or side public right-of-way, or that would be visible in the absence of vegetation or landscaping.
5. Alterations to the portions of a property that are not visible from the public right-of-way should be subject to very lenient review. Most changes to the rear of the properties should be approved as a matter of course.

The Historic Preservation Ordinance directs the HPC to be lenient in its judgment of plans for structures in historic districts which are of little historical or design significance or for plans involving new construction, unless such plans would seriously impair the historic or architectural value of surrounding historic resources or would impair the character of the historic district. The purpose of categorizing structures in the historic district as "outstanding," "contributing," and "non-contributing/out of period" is to provide the HPC with guidance as to the architectural and historical significance of various resources. Structures with the highest degree of importance should receive the most detailed level of design review for HAWPs, structures of little significance should receive the most lenient level of design review for HAWPs, etc.

HPC review of exterior alterations, changes, and/or additions to existing structures does not supersede other regulatory requirements. Chevy Chase Village regulations would continue to apply to any alterations, changes, and/or additions regulated by the Village.

Outstanding and Contributing Resources

The following principles should apply to HAWP applications for exterior alterations, changes, and/or additions to both types of resources, except where specific differences are stated for outstanding resources. These principles use the terms "lenient scrutiny," "moderate scrutiny" and "strict scrutiny." These terms are defined as follows:

² City and County of Denver. Denver Landmark Preservation Commission and Planning and Development Office. *Design Guidelines for Country Club Historic District*. May 1995. P. 9

³ Ibid. [The same page as in the preceding note.]

⁴ Ibid. [The same page as in the preceding note.]

"Lenient scrutiny" means that the emphasis of the review should be on issues of general massing and scale, and compatibility with the surrounding streetscape, and should allow for a very liberal interpretation of preservation rules. Most changes should be permitted unless there are major problems with massing, scale or compatibility.

✓ *"Moderate scrutiny"* involves a higher standard of review than "lenient scrutiny." Besides issues of massing, scale and compatibility, preserving the integrity of the resource is taken into account. Alterations should be designed so that the altered structure still contributes to the district. Use of compatible new materials, rather than the original building materials, should be permitted. Planned changes should be compatible with the structure's existing design, but should not be required to replicate its architectural style.

"Strict scrutiny" means that the planned changes should be reviewed to insure that the integrity of the significant exterior architectural or landscaping features and details is not compromised. However, strict scrutiny should not be "strict in theory but fatal in fact" -- i.e., it does not mean that there can be no changes but simply that proposed changes should be reviewed with extra care.

The following principles are not intended to cover all possible types of exterior alterations, changes and/or additions. HAWP applications for other types of exterior alterations, changes and/or additions should be reviewed in a manner that is consistent with the two paramount principles identified above -- fostering the Village's shared commitment to evolving eclecticism while maintaining its open, park-like character.

Awnings should be subject to moderate scrutiny. Addition of plastic or metal awnings should be discouraged.

Balconies should be subject to moderate scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if they are not.

Decks should be subject to moderate scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if they are not.

Doors should be subject to moderate scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if they are not. For outstanding resources, they should be subject to strict scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way. Addition of compatible storm doors should be encouraged.

Dormers should be subject to moderate scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if they are not. For outstanding resources they should be subject to strict scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way.

Driveways should be subject to strict scrutiny only with regard to their impact on landscaping, particularly mature trees. In all other respects, driveways should be subject to lenient scrutiny. Parking pads and other paving in front yards should be discouraged.

Exterior trim (such as moldings on doors and windows) on contributing resources should be subject to moderate scrutiny if it is visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if it is not. Exterior trim on outstanding resources should be subject to strict scrutiny if it is visible from the public right-of-way.

Fences should be subject to strict scrutiny if they detract significantly from the existing open streetscape. Otherwise, fences should be subject to moderate scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if they are not.⁵

Fire damage repair should be subject to lenient scrutiny. No one should be required, on grounds of historic preservation, to undertake fire damage repairs that would not result in a reasonable return on investment.

Garages and accessory buildings which are detached from the main house should be subject to lenient scrutiny but should be compatible with the main building. If an existing garage or accessory building has any common wall with, or attachment to, the main residence, then any addition to the garage or accessory building should be subject to review in accordance with the Guidelines applicable to "major additions." Any proposed garage or accessory building which is to have a common wall with or attachment to the main residence should also be reviewed in accordance with the Guidelines applicable to "major additions."

Gazebos and other garden structures should be subject to moderate scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if they are not.

Gutters are not currently subject to review and should not be reviewed.

Lampposts and other exterior lights should be subject to moderate scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if they are not.

Lot coverage should be subject to strict scrutiny, in view of the critical importance of preserving the Village's open, park-like character.

Major additions should, where feasible, be placed to the rear of the existing structure so that they are less visible from the public right-of-way. Major additions which substantially alter or obscure the front of the structure should be discouraged but not automatically prohibited. For example, where lot size does not permit placement to the rear, and the proposed addition is compatible with the street scape, it should be subject to moderate scrutiny for contributing resources, but strict scrutiny for outstanding resources.

⁵ Although air conditioning units are not subject to review under the Historic Preservation Ordinance, structures designed to reduce the noise emitted by such units are reviewed and should be subject to lenient scrutiny, so as not to discourage residents from erecting such structures.

Porches should be subject to moderate scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if they are not. Enclosures of existing side and rear porches have occurred throughout the Village with little or no adverse impact on its character, and they should be permitted where compatibly designed. Strict scrutiny should be applied to additions above existing front porches.

Roofing materials should be subject to moderate scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if they are not. In general, materials differing from the original should be approved for contributing resources. These guidelines recognize that for outstanding resources replacement in kind is always advocated. For example, replacement of slate roofs in kind is usually required. However, the application should be reviewed with consideration given to economic hardship. Furthermore, as technology continues to change and improve, other building materials may become available to provide an appropriate substitute for replacement in kind, and the reviewing agency should be open to consideration of these alternative solutions.

Satellite dishes should be subject to strict scrutiny if visible from the public right-of-way, otherwise they should be subject to lenient scrutiny.⁶

Second or third story additions or expansions which do not exceed the footprint of the first story should be subject to moderate scrutiny, in view of the predominance of large scale houses in the Village. (See draft report at 7.1.) For outstanding resources, however, such additions or expansions should be subject to strict scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way.

Sheds should be subject to moderate scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if they are not.

Shutters should be subject to moderate scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if they are not. For outstanding resources, however, they should be subject to strict scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way.

Sidewalks should be subject to strict scrutiny with regard to their impact on landscaping, particularly mature trees. In addition, sidewalks pertaining to outstanding resources should be subject to strict scrutiny. In all other respects, sidewalks should be subject to moderate scrutiny.

Siding should be subject to moderate scrutiny if it is visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if it is not. Artificial siding on areas visible from the public right-of-way should be discouraged where such materials would replace or damage original building materials that are in good condition. Vinyl and aluminum siding should be discouraged.

Skylights should be subject to strict scrutiny if visible from the public right-of-way, otherwise they should be subject to lenient scrutiny.

Swimming pools should be subject to lenient scrutiny.

⁶

TV antennas are not subject to review under the Historic Preservation Ordinance.

Tree removal should be subject to strict scrutiny and consistent with the Chevy Chase Village Urban Forest Ordinance.

✓ Windows (including window replacements) should be subject to moderate scrutiny if they are visible from the public right-of-way, lenient scrutiny if they are not. For outstanding resources, they should be subject to strict scrutiny. Addition of compatible exterior storm windows should be encouraged, whether visible from the public right-of-way or not. Vinyl and aluminum windows (other than storm windows) should be discouraged. Addition of security bars should be subject to lenient scrutiny, whether visible from the public right-of-way or not.

Non-Contributing/Out-of-Period Resources

Non-contributing/out-of-period resources are either buildings that are of little or no architectural and historical significance to the historic district or newer buildings constructed outside the district's primary period of historical importance. HAWP applications for exterior alterations, changes, and/or additions to these types of resources should receive the most lenient level of design review.

Most alterations and additions to non-contributing/out-of-period resources should be approved as a matter of course. The only exceptions would be major additions and alterations to the scale and massing of the structure which affect the surrounding streetscape and/or landscape and could impair the character of the historic district as a whole.

Demolition of non-contributing/out-of-period resources should be permitted. However, any new building should be reviewed under the guidelines for new construction that follow.

New Construction

The goal of new construction within the proposed historic district is to be sympathetic to the traditional street and building patterns in the district, while allowing for creative new building designs. In addition to the approach of recalling earlier architectural styles in new buildings, it is appropriate for new structures to reflect and represent the period in which they are built. It is not the intention of these guidelines to inhibit or exclude creative design solutions that may be developed for new buildings in the district. Unique designs, reflecting architectural excellence, which do not adhere strictly to traditional neighborhood practices, but are sensitive to and compatible with the fabric of the community, should be supported.

The key considerations in reviewing new construction should be the two paramount principles identified above -- fostering the Village's shared commitment to evolving eclecticism while maintaining its open, park-like character.

CHEVY CHASE VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

